

WIN BATMAN and SUPERMAN PLAYSUITS!

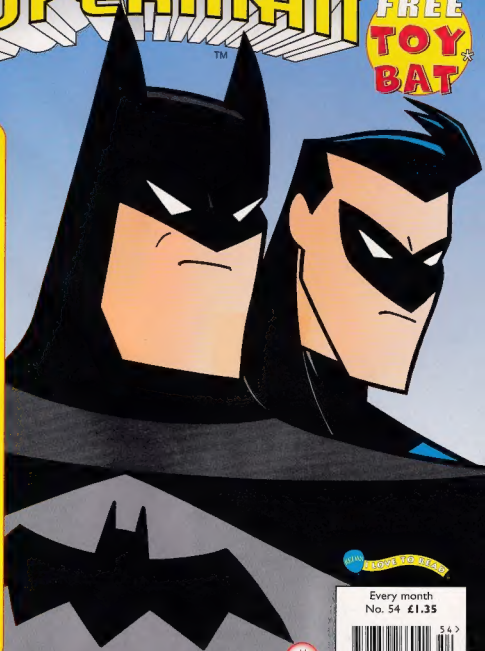


BATMAN AND SUPERMAN



STORY
INSIDE

FREE
TOY
BAT*



*CE This toy complies with EN71 (Toy Safety). **Gift Warning:** Not suitable for children under 3 years of age. Small parts: potential choking hazard. Imported by Henbrandt Ltd, E17 8AB. Please retain this information for future reference. This gift may not be available on overseas copies and may differ from that specified.

REALLY LOVE TO READ

Every month
No. 54 £1.35



9 771359 266041



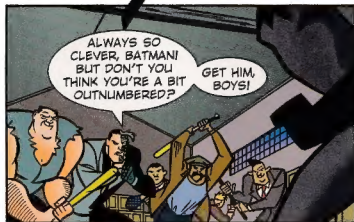
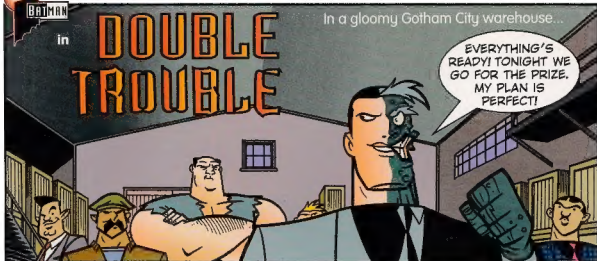
FEATURING THE NEW BATMAN ADVENTURES!

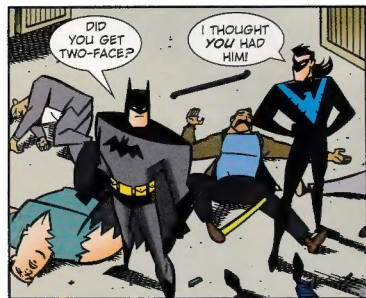


in

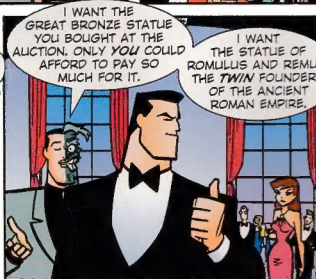
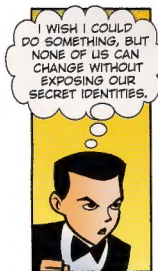
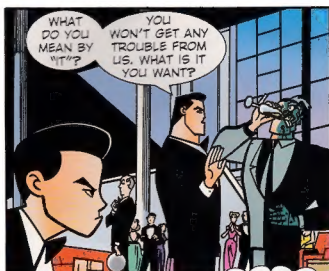
DOUBLE TROUBLE

In a gloomy Gotham City warehouse...









Earlier that evening...

IF THIS WAS TWO-FACE'S HIDEOUT, PERHAPS I CAN FIND A CLUE TO WHAT HE'S UP TO.

THAT MUST BE IT! HE MUST WANT SOMETHING FROM THE SALE...BUT IT TOOK PLACE OVER A WEEK AGO!

GOthAM CITY AUCTIONS

FOR SALE
GREAT WORKS OF ART
INCLUDING
PAINTINGS AND
BRONZE STATUES

PLEASE SEE OUR
CATALOGUE FOR
DETAILS

"VALUABLE ANTIQUE BRONZE OF ROMULUS AND REMUS. LEGEND HAS IT THAT THESE TWINS, RAISED BY A WOLF, WERE THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE GREAT ROMAN EMPIRE."

ROMULUS AND REMUS

TWINS! THAT'S WHAT TWO-FACE WANTS! THE STATUE OF THE TWINS!

BUT BRUCE BOUGHT THAT...OH, NO! BRUCE!

I MUST GET TO WAYNE MANOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!





There are ghostly goings-on in Metropolis!

PHANTOMS

Arthur Lomas considered himself to be a guy with both feet firmly on the ground. He'd seen some weird stuff working as a security guard at S.T.A.R. Labs, but to him it was all just high science.

From an early age, Arthur had read ghost stories, enjoying them for what they were — stories. To him, there were no such thing as phantoms or ghosts.

So it came as a shock to Arthur when two figures walked up to and right *through* the perimeter fence, their ghostly forms floating an inch or so above the ground. Both seemed angry and the man was huge, with an eye patch and body armour which made him look like a space-age pirate. He swiped at the fence,

as if trying to tear it down. The woman was dressed almost identically and seethed with anger too.

Then, as suddenly as they had appeared, the phantoms vanished. Arthur let out a long breath. He decided there was no way this was going into his shift report, and his ghost story collection was going straight into the dustbin.

It was four in the morning, and Clark Kent was wide awake. He'd woken up with a start, disturbed by something he couldn't identify, his nerves were jangling and his skin was dotted with goosebumps.

As far as Clark's supersenses were aware, nothing was out of place in his apartment. He'd scanned every nook and cranny — microscopically — but there was no sign of any intruder. If there had been one, then whoever it was had been a lot quieter than any mouse.

Another ten minutes passed, and Clark finally gave up on sleep altogether. It was pointless. If he was awake, he might as well be up and about. Perhaps an early morning patrol would clear his head.

Moments later, Clark was airborne, his pyjamas replaced by the red, blue and gold costume of Superman. Metropolis was quiet, dead quiet. Apart from the odd lone vehicle making its way through the early morning streets, the city appeared eerily deserted. Superman decided to take a pass over the *Daily Planet* building, comforted by the knowledge that there



would be activity in the newsroom, even at this hour of the morning.

As he neared the building, Superman immediately became aware of two figures on the roof. They were standing boldly in front of the vast globe, the highest point of the building.

His telescopic vision brought the pair into focus, and Superman got his second shock of the night. It was Jax-Ur and Mala, the two rogue Kryptonians who had challenged him in the past. Both possessed brilliant military minds and superpowers that matched his own. They were, without a doubt, two of the most dangerous and deadly foes he had ever had to face.

Superman decided he could afford to take no chances, and powered towards the two criminals at high speed. If he could catch them unawares, perhaps he could finish this fight quickly and easily.

But instead of connecting with the two figures, Superman passed right through them, as though they weren't there at all. He collided instead with the giant *Daily Planet* globe, and while the impact didn't do him any harm, it knocked the globe completely off the building!

There was no time to puzzle about the mystery of Jax-Ur and Mala. The globe was by far his biggest concern. It dropped towards the street below, where a *Daily Planet* van, loaded with early editions of the newspaper, was reversing out. Superman had only a fraction of a second to react before the van, and its driver, would be crushed.

The Man of Steel flew down after the globe, finding a handhold on the ring that went around it. He stopped it in mid-air, exactly ten feet off the ground.



As Superman returned the globe to the top of the building, welding it back in place with a burst of heat vision, the ghost-like figures of Jax-Ur and Mala pointed at him, their faces grim. Then they simply disappeared. Unlikely as it seemed, Superman believed he was being haunted.

Clark Kent spent much of the next morning at the *Daily Planet* worrying about the ghostly visit. Was this his conscience pricking him, he wondered? As far as he knew, Jax-Ur and Mala were still locked up within the Phantom Zone, an other-dimensional prison that existed outside of normal space and time. He had personally put them in there.

Clark suddenly realised he had little or no idea exactly how the Phantom Zone worked, or what it was like inside. He wondered if Mala and Jax-Ur were hurt. They were dangerous criminals who were constantly threatening Earth, but he had no wish to see them suffer.

Clark decided he would have to find out what had occurred, and that meant entering the Phantom Zone himself!

As he was making for the lift, Clark noticed Lois Lane, who was just arriving for work. He was surprised. Normally, Lois was there well before him, eager to claim the first byline of the day.

"I overslept," explained Lois, even though Clark hadn't actually asked. "I had a really bad night. I kept thinking there was someone in my apartment."

Clark muttered words of understanding as Lois hurried off, but an awful possibility had just occurred to him. If Mala and Jax-Ur were haunting Lois, it meant they weren't just after Superman. They were after his friends too!

Now it was more important than ever to find out what was going on, and, after a quick change, Superman was on his way to see Professor Emil Hamilton at S.T.A.R. Labs.

Hamilton was clearly unhappy. The dimensional technology at S.T.A.R. Labs was completely capable of creating a gateway leading into the Phantom Zone,

response, a vast loop of machinery hummed into life, and within it a gateway into the Phantom Zone began to form.

As he waited to enter, Superman's superhearing picked up a fragment of conversation from nearby. In the staff cafeteria, security guard, Arthur Lomas, had finally decided to tell a fellow worker about his supernatural experience. His

changed. It was clear to everyone present that having gained her freedom, what she now wanted...was revenge!

Howling, Mala hurtled at Superman, crashing into him. The Man of Steel was hammered back into a nearby wall, which collapsed. The two struggled, Kryptonian pitted against Kryptonian.

Then, from the still open gateway, Jax-Ur appeared. His reaction to seeing Superman was the same as Mala's, and he too launched himself into the battle.

Superman saw his chance, and dodged Jax-Ur's charge. The criminal went flying past, colliding painfully with Mala instead. Before they could untangle themselves, Superman used his superbreath to blow them both back into the Phantom Zone. Professor Hamilton quickly sealed the gateway, imprisoning Mala and Jax-Ur once more.

Later, Professor Hamilton confirmed that the ghostly appearances had been due to abnormal sunspot activity in outer space creating a weakness in the Phantom Zone. Though only able to appear as ghosts, Mala had realised that she could try and trick Superman into opening the door to the dimension, letting them escape.

When Superman had realised that it wasn't just him and his friends seeing phantoms, but that the guard had also had visitations, he began to realise what was going on. Jax-Ur and Mala weren't haunting him, they were just trying to trick someone into setting them free.

Of course, once he'd grasped their plan, they didn't stand a *ghost* of a chance!



but he was worried that while it would let Superman enter, there was nothing to stop the inmates leaving.

Superman shared the professor's concerns, but didn't see what choice they had. Even criminals like Jax-Ur and Mala didn't deserve to be abandoned if they were suffering. He had to go in.

"It's your decision," said Hamilton with a long sigh, and keyed in a series of commands into the main computer. In

descriptions of the phantoms matched those of Jax-Ur and Mala.

Superman reacted immediately, telling Professor Hamilton to shut down the door to the dimension. It wasn't just him and his friends being haunted, so that meant...

At the open gateway, Mala suddenly appeared. "Free, at last!" she cried, a triumphant smile on her face. On seeing Superman, her expression

THE END 